Heterosexuals do flaunt sexuality

G.T. 7-21-91

In response to Sandra Martin's letter published in the Gazette Telegraph July 17, let me say just a couple of things.

Ms. Martin claims that heterosexuals don't flaunt their sexuality and she objects to the fact that gay people flaunt theirs. The point needs to be made that straight people flaunt their heterosexuality every minute of the day — whether it be a man and woman walking hand-in-hand down the street, a recognized marriage ceremony being held in a church or a love story on television or at the theater. And how about all the wedding, anniversary and engagement announcements in our weekend paper?

These things and many, many more are very commonplace and very accepted — because they are the norm. However, since gay people are not part of mainstream society, their activities are shunned by many in society and in quite a number of cases, gays are looked down upon as people, simply by virtue of one aspect of their personality.

Never mind the fact that they pay taxes just like everyone else; never mind the fact that they work hard to pay their bills and be responsible citizens like everybody else; and never mind the fact that most gay people conduct their daily lives just like everybody else.

I'm really sick and tired of this fight between gays and straights. There have been countless letters in recent months from outraged and very fundamentalist citizens of Colorado Springs, especially with regard to the now-dead proposed Human Rights Ordinance.

It really shouldn't matter what your own religious beliefs are. You need to understand that gay citizens of this country are supposed to have the same protections under the laws and Constitution as everyone else, yet they're discriminated against in many countless ways and there are not enough federal and state agencies to adequately enforce civil rights protections for many minorities, gays included.

People should also be aware of the fact that in only a handful of states in this country do gays have protection against being fired from their jobs or evicted from their rented apartments and homes, among other things, because of their lifestyle. So much for any civil rights protections they supposedly have, and so much for the fact that we're all supposed to be equal citizens in this country with equal rights under the law.

This should not be a religious issue — after all, there is a separation of church and state in this country. Everyone, no matter their sexuality, color, handicap, etc., should stop all this fighting and just treat their fellow citizens with love, understanding and respect. That, after all, is what really counts.

Finally, with regard to the AIDS issue. Since no one is absolutely sure exactly where or how this terrible disease started, perhaps we shouldn't be so quick to say things like "gays brought this disease on themselves." It just so happens that it does affect a large number of gays. But it also affects a large number of straight people too.

Take a look at any recent statistics and studies. It's something for all Americans to be concerned about, just like cancer and other terminal illnesses.

Let's just try to accept each other for the kind of person each other is, rather than what a person may do that we may not approve of.

— **Cheryl Hentz**
Colorado Springs